UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

BRIEF NOTES
ON THE
PUBLIC DOMAIN

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"Highlights in the History of the Public Domain
1770-1950"

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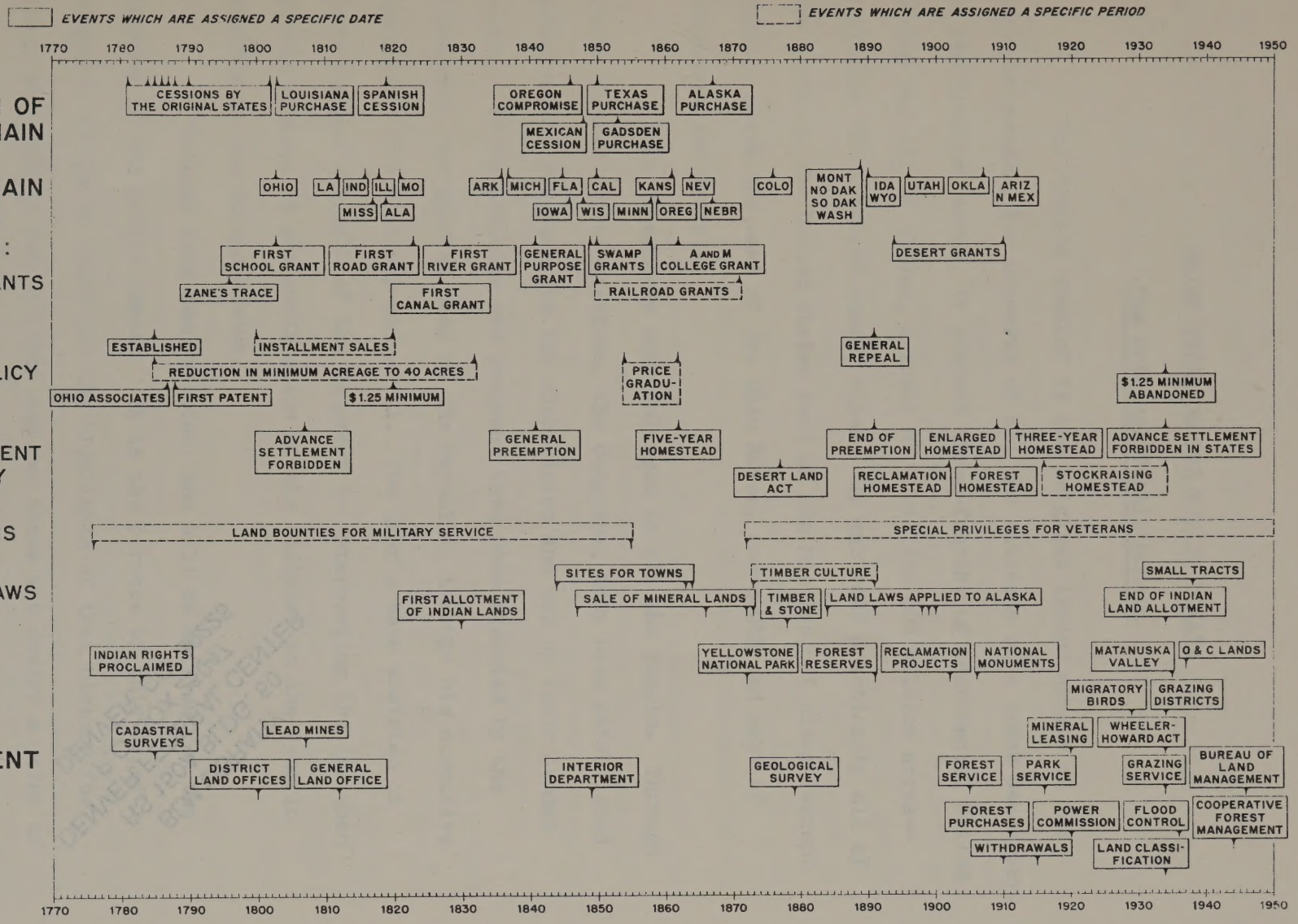
Revised January 1957

= HIGHLIGHTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN =



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BRIEF NOTES ON THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

The Original Public Domain

The "public domain" is the original landed estate of the American people, the property of all the citizens of a great democracy. In its broadest sense, it covered three-fourths of continental United States and all of Alaska, a total of 1 billion 800 million acres—2 million 800 thousand square miles. It embraced practically all of the lands in the United States west of the Mississippi River (except Texas), north and west of the Ohio River, and south and west of Tennessee and Georgia.

This tremendous area belonged to all the people. Through their elected representatives, the Congress, they have established policies and programs for the disposition and use of their landed estate. These policies and programs have been executed by the President, the elected head of the Republic, through his executive agencies, both military and civil. The Courts have assisted in carrying out the will of the Congress by interpreting the law when problems arose in the application of the statutes in the dynamic economy of the United States.

Volumes have been written, and will be written, on the history of the public domain. It is the purpose of this brief pamphlet merely to point out the highlights of that history for those who wish to run and read and for those who desire a point of departure in a more intensive study of the public domain.

Acquisition of the Public Domain

Cessions by the Original States. At the successful conclusion of the Revolutionary War, the boundaries of the newly established Republic were determined by treaty with Great Britain. But the boundaries of the thirteen original States were not fixed. Seven of these States laid claim to "wilderness" areas lying west of their present boundaries and stretching to the Mississippi River. These claims to an appreciable extent conflicted with one another, partly because of the inconsistencies in colonial charters. As a part of the compromises which led to the formation of a strong central government these states, between 1781 and 1802, ceded to the Federal Government, with certain exceptions and reservations, their clains to their western lands, thus creating a public domain of more than 200 million acres.

Other accessions. Additions to the public domain in the United States proper were made by the Federal Government by the purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France in 1803 (LOUISIANA PURCHASE), the cession of Florida by Spain, together with adjustments in the boundaries of Spanish and American holdings west of the Mississippi River in 1819 (SPANISH CESSION), the settlement of the boundaries of American and British possessions in the Northwest in 1846 (OREGON COMPROMISE), the cession of the Southwest by Mexico in 1848 (MEXICAN CESSION), the purchase from Texas of more than 75 million acres of land north and west of its present boundaries in 1850 (TEXAS PURCHASE), and the purchase from Mexico

of 19 million acres in the Southwest in 1853 (GADSDEN PURCHASE). Russia sold the entire Territory of Alaska to the United States in 1867 (ALASKA PURCHASE).

The total acreage of land thus acquired by the Federal Government for the people amounted to 1 billion 400 million acres in the States and 365 million acres in Alaska.

Admission of the Public Domain States

Under less democratic concepts, this vast area could have been relegated to colonial status for the aggrandizement of the original States. It was early decided, however, that the newly acquired lands were to be subdivided into new States and admitted to the Union on equal footing with the parent States as soon as local governments could be firmly established. This policy became somewhat entangled in the sectional and other political disputes of the growing Republic but between 1803 and 1912 the entire public domain, with the exception of Alaska, was carved into new States which were admitted into the Union on an equal basis with all other States.

Upon their admission, the public-domain States waived all claim to the Federal lands within their boundaries.

Disposals-Land Grants

In the early days of the Nation, the Federal Government was short on cash but long on land. The policy was then early established to use land in lieu of cash to encourage the installation of "internal improvements" to build up the country, particularly

in the newly acquired territories. Thus, when each public-domain State was admitted to the Union, it received grants of public lands which it could use or dispose of for various public purposes. These grants were increasingly more liberal as time went on and included grants for the support of common-school systems and schools of higher education, various types of public institutions, and other public projects. The FIRST SCHOOL GRANT was made to Ohio in 1803. This policy is still in force, for 21 million acres in Alaska have been designated since 1915 for granting to the Territory for its school system when it is admitted as a State. Recent statehood bills, however, would have provided for far more liberal grants.

In addition to this general policy of granting lands to States upon their admission to the Union, the Congress has enacted a large body of law providing for grants for special programs. For the most part, the Congress granted the lands to the States which in turn either granted the lands to private companies to undertake the projects or used the proceeds from the disposition of the lands for public undertakings. Outstanding among these grant programs were those for the construction of military wagon roads (FIRST ROAD GRANT, 1823; last 1869), the construction of canals (FIRST CANAL GRANT, 1827; last 1866), the improvement of rivers (FIRST RIVER GRANT, 1828; last 1862), the construction of railroads (RAILROAD GRANTS, 1850-1871), the reclamation of swamp lands (SWAMP GRANTS, 1849, 1850, et al.), and the reclamation of arid lands (DESERT GRANTS, 1894 and 1910). Other interesting grants include the 1862 grant to all the States to

provide funds for agriculture and mechanical colleges (A and M COLLEGE GRANT) and the 1841 grant of 500,00 acres to each of various States for use in financing various types of "internal improvements" (GENERAL PURPOSE GRANT.)

Not all improvement grants, however, were made to the States. In 1796, for example, the Congress granted a preemption right to three square miles of land in Ohio to Ebenezer Zane to maintain a road (ZANE'S TRACE) and ferry service on the road from Wheeling, West Virginia, to Limestone. With respect to the railroad grants mentioned above, the earlier grants were made to the States. But beginning in 1862 with the grants for the great transcontinental railroads, most of the grants were made direct to private corporations organized to undertake the building of the roads.

In all, the United States has given to the States more than 200 million acres of public-domain lands and, to railroad corporations, more than 90 million acres.

Disposals — Cash Policy

In view of the anemic state of the national Treasury, there was strong demand in the young Republic to use the public domain as a major source of revenue. Although, except for a few isolated years, the public domain never yielded a substantial proportion of Federal income, "disposal for revenue" was long a major public-domain policy. It might be said that the policy was in effect from 1785 to 1891 when the sale statutes were generally

repealed. However, a glance at the chart of the highlights of public-domain history will show that other policies of the Government were effectively working at cross-purposes to the revenue idea through most of this period.

From the beginning there was difference of opinion as to the best methods for the sale of public lands. Some proposals would definitely favor the speculator and land companies. Others were designed to tilt the scales to the benefit of the individual settler or group settlements ("township planting"). Some statesmen favored action which would emphasize the possibilities of revenue while others would sacrifice revenue in order to encourage orderly settlement of the wilderness areas. Another conflict was "cash on the barrelhead" versus installment payments. Under the democratic process compromise necessarily resulted.

In 1785 a system of sales at public auction was ESTABLISHED, the public domain to be surveyed and sold partly in units of 36 square miles and partly in units of 1 square mile. The FIRST PATENT (deed) executed by the Government was issued March 4, 1788. The idea of large sales to land companies which would in turn sell smaller tracts to actual settlers persisted and a couple of large sales were made by special law, such as the sale to the OHIO ASSOCIATES (Ohio Company) in 1787. The pressure of events however, was in the direction of sales in small units so that by 1832 a series of laws accomplished the REDUCTION IN MINIMUM ACREAGE TO 40 ACRES, "the smallest legal subdivision."

The Congress instituted a "credit" system in 1800, permitting INSTALLMENT SALES whereby purchasers of public lands were to pay for public lands in four annual installments. Difficulties in the administration of the law quickly arose and were aggravated by a series of measures affording relief to delinquent purchasers. The credit system was abolished in 1820.

The act of 1820 provided for sales for cash of public land at public auction in units as small as 80 acres. The lands were first offered at public auction. Lands unsold at public auction were then open for purchase (private sale, first-come first-served) at the minimum statutory price which was finally fixed at $1.25 per acre. In general, this was the system in force until the GENERAL REPEAL of the cash-sale laws in 1891.

The $1.25 MINIMUM applied to most public lands but higher minimum prices were later established for certain classes of lands, such as public lands within railroad land-grant limits and some ceded Indian lands.

On the other hand, some advocates of "cheap" public lands fought for a system of graduation of the minimum statutory price. Such a plan was finally instituted in 1854. The price of public-lands unsold after offering at public auction was determined by the length of time it had been on the market, those having remained unsold for 35 years or more being valued at 12½ cents per acre. The PRICE GRADUATION act was repealed in 1862 and accounted for the sale of more than 25 million acres of land.

The general repeal of the cash-sale laws in 1891 did not affect the authority to sell at public auction "isolated tracts" of public lands, i.e., small areas of public lands surrounded by private holdings. In 1934 the authority to sell public lands was enlarged to include "rough and mountainous tracts" which were not isolated. At the same time, the Congress decided to have the $1.25 MINIMUM ABANDONED, with respect to sales at public auction. Lands to be sold at public auction are now appraised prior to sale and the appraised price is the minimum price. The $1.25 per-acre price, however, is still retained for such minor transactions as commutation of homestead entries.

Disposals — Settlement Policy

As previously stated, the revenue policy from the beginning was modified in the interest of settlement of the "western wilderness." The compromises, however, did not still the voices which demanded the opportunity for unrestricted, uncontrolled settlement of the public domain and the donation of public lands to those who would settle on them and reduce then to cultivation.

In 1785 provisions for the rectangular survey of the public lands ruled out from the start hodge-podge disposal of the public domain. In 1807, not only was ADVANCED SETTLEMENT FORBIDDEN by Congress prior to sale of public lands or other permission, but penalties for trespassers were also specified. Legislative fiat, almost needless to say, was not wholly effective. A series of limited preemption laws was passed during the period 1800 to 1841 which gave

"squatters" the right to purchase the lands upon which they settled. Finally, the Congress enacted a GENERAL PREEMPTION law which permitted settlers to enter upon public lands, eventually both surveyed and unsurveyed, and to secure patent for them after complying with the rules as to residence and cultivation and after paying for the land at the minimum statutory price. But any price was too much in the opinion of the champions of the settlers. In 1862 they won their battle when President Abraham Lincoln signed the FIVE-YEAR HOMESTEAD act. THE END OF PREEMPTION did not come, however, until 1891, when the 1841 act was repealed.

The original homestead act permitted settlers to enter as much as 160 acres of public lands, eventually either surveyed or unsurveyed lands. The settler became entitled to a patent after constructing a habitable house, reducing part of the land to cultivation, and residing upon the lands for a period of 5 years (reduced to 3 years by the THREE-YEAR HOMESTEAD act of 1912). Under these conditions, there was no charge for the lands except for nominal service charges. Modifications of the homestead act included the increase of the acreage enterable to 320 acres for homesteaders on dry-farming lands in the West (ENLARGED HOMESTEAD act of 1909) and to 640 acres for homesteaders on arid range lands (STOCKRAISING HOMESTEAD act of 1916). No cultivation was needed in connection with stockraising homesteads, installation of range improvements being required instead. Irrigable lands within Federal reclamation projects were opened to RECLAMATION HOMESTEAD in 1902

and agricultural lands within national forests to FOREST HOMESTEAD in 1906. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 ended homesteading under the stockraising homestead act. The classification provisions of the Taylor Act result in again having ADVANCE SETTLEMENT FORBIDDEN IN THE STATES without prior classification by the Government. The ban on advance settlement does not apply to public lands in Alaska.

Under the homestead act of 1862, as amended, almost 300 million acres have been patented to settlers. Its major provisions are still in force.

The DESERT LAND ACT is in a class by itself. It applies to public lands which are not cultivable without irrigation. The entryman is not required to reside upon the land but he must demonstrate that he can irrigate it and cultivate it profitably. In addition, he must pay for the land at the rate of $1.25 per acre. Only 10 million acres have been patented under this law.

Disposals — Veterans

Historically, the granting of lands on the American continent to war veterans preceded the Declaration of Independence, by both Great Britain and the colonies, they having granted LAND BOUNTIES FOR WAR MILITARY SERVICE. The colonies in revolt in 1776 promised bounties to induce enlistments but it was not until 1796 that conditions were favorable to the enactment of granting legislation. The first grants were relatively restricted in scope. But as time went on and as emphasis changed from grants to induce enlistments to grants to reward military service, the grants

became more and more liberal. The legislation of 1855, as amended, in effect provided for grants for practically all types of military and naval personnel, regular and irregular, in practically all U. S. military engagements, including Indian campaigns, and for a grant of 160 acres for as little as 14 days of service or engagement in a single battle. The first ideas of restricting the location of bounty land warrants to induce concentration of veterans on actual frontier areas was abandoned by making the warrants locatable on any available public land and by making then assignable.

With the Civil War, the military bounty policy was not renewed for various reasons, including passage of the Homestead Act, the large number of veterans, the declining area of available public domain, and the large scale transfer of previously issued warrants to speculators. Instead, the Congress turned its attention to the idea of cash bonuses and other aids to veterans. With respect to the public domain, SPECIAL PRIVILEGES FOR VETERANS have been introduced since the Civil War to give veterans advantages over the general public in the acquisition of public lands. Thus, among other things, they now enjoy first choice of lands opened to entry under the homestead, desert-land, and small tract laws. Under the homestead laws, the period of residence on the land and the amount of cultivation required have been reduced, the extent of the reduction depending on the length of the veteran's service in the armed forces.

Disposals — Other Laws

It is obvious that the classification of the public-land laws in various categories is more or less artificial since the various laws in many respects affected each other and often served similar purposes. Similarly, in a brief paper it is not possible to study and discuss the thousands of laws, public and private, which have been enacted. Brief mention, however, may be made of a few enactments to give a more rounded picture of public-domain history.

The policy of the United States has been to make no disposition of any part of the public domain without first acquiring from the Indians, by one means or another, cession of their rights of occupancy to the lands. Furthermore, the policy was to remove the natives to distant parts and to concentrate them in tribal reservations. In 1830 the FIRST ALLOTMENT OF INDIAN LANDS began the practice of breaking up such reservations by allotting the reservation lands to individual Indians and by selling the "excess" for the account of the Indians. In 1934, this diminution of the tribal land bases was stopped by the END OF INDIAN LAND ALLOTMENT and reversed by the acquisition of lands for tribal ownership.

The first general legislation with respect to SITES FOR TOWNS (urban centers) permitted established communities to preempt the lands they occupied. Other laws provided for the survey of town sites on the application of occupants or proposed occupants

and the sale of lots by the Government at public auction. The President was also authorized to reserve "natural and prospective centres of population" for subdivision into lots to be sold at public auction.

General policy has been to differentiate mineral from "agricultural" lands (i.e., non-mineral lands) and to exclude mineral lands from the operation of the "agricultural" land laws. From 1807 to 1847 Congress experimented with the leasing of lead deposits but in that year decided instead in favor of the SALE OF MINERAL LANDS in the midwest valuable for lead and other ores. After the California gold rush, the Congress enacted general legislation governing mineral lands whereby the discoverer of the deposit became entitled to it. He was authorized to receive a patent for the lands upon payment of $2.50 (placer claims) or $5.00 (lode claims) per acre. A special las was enacted for the sale of coal lands. These laws are still in force except as to the leasable minerals, discussed below. Under several laws in effect today and under certain specified conditions, the mineral and surface of the public lands can be separated and the surface disposed of under the "agricultural" land laws.

An ill-fated attempt was made to introduce trees on the plains through the granting of lands to those who would plant and protect them. The TIMBER CULTURE act, however, failed of its purpose and was repealed in 1891.

Special laws relating to particular types of land in-

clude the TIMBER AND STONE act, governing negotiated sale of lands valuable for timber or stone and unfit for cultivation, and the SMALL TRACTS act, permitting lease and sale of tracts of 5 acres or less which are valuable for recreational, home, or business site purposes.

The LAND LAWS APPLIED TO ALASKA include the basic body of the public land laws and special legislation to cover special situations in the Territory. They do not include, generally speaking, laws which are inapplicable to conditions in Alaska, as for example, is the enlarged homestead act. The outstanding exception, however, is the Taylor Grazing Act, discussed below.

Management

In its broad sense, management of lands includes the processes of disposal. For the purposes of this paper, however, management is generally restricted to the measures taken to protect and improve public lands and resources.

The public domain was subject to two classes of rights, the legal title of the United States and the right of occupancy of the native Indians. Some of the efforts of the United States to protect these rights from trespass have already been mentioned. To this end also were INDIAN RIGHTS PROCLAIMED in 1783. This proclamation prohibited all persons from settling on lands inhabited or claimed by Indians or from purchasing or receiving lands from Indians without the express authority of the Congress. This policy has been consistently followed.

The rectangular system of CADASTRAL SURVEYS, inaugurated in 1785 and continued to the present with improvements, was designed in part at least to protect the public lands. The design of the system prevented the vast confusion and boundless litigation over land titles which resulted from systems of surveys of "indiscriminate locations" used by other governments with the result that even the government could not determine the boundaries of its own lands. The system provided an easy means of land description, enabling the maintenance of good land-title records, some of which are still in use after more than 100 years. Rectangular surveys also tended to promote orderly and compact settlement of the wilderness and since the survey lines did not follow natural boundaries, forced settlers to take poor lands as well as good lands with their entries.

By 1800 the need for local land offices situated near available lands was clearly established when four DISTRICT LAND OFFICES were opened to serve the Ohio Territory. The number and location of these offices were varied as conditions changed, the peak number open at any one time being 123 in 1890. Only 15 land offices exist today. In the beginning the heads of such offices("Registers" and "Receivers" originally; "Managers" today) had a large degree of authority which was largely diminished over the years. With the creation of the Bureau of Land Management, the managers were granted enlarged authority to act in public-land matters.

The development of a Federal land management program was followed by the creation of new Federal agencies to administer

Federal lands and to work in the larger field of resource conservation. In 1800 the district land offices were operating units of the Treasury Department, a reflection of the revenue policy of the Government since domestic affairs generally at that time were under the jurisdiction of the State Department. The GENERAL LAND OFFICE was established in 1812 but was retained in the Treasury until 1849 when the INTERIOR DEPARTMENT was created to handle domestic affairs. The role of the Interior has changed over the years and is the "mother" of many Federal Departments and agencies, now independent or combined with other units. Its present functions are largely in the field of resource conservation.

Although reservations of land were made in early years for public purposes, such as for military posts, the first great reservation was created in 1872 by the establishment of YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK. Other reservations of scenic recreational areas were subsequently made for their preservation for the enjoyment of all the people. Later legislation was passed authorizing the reservation of NATIONAL MONUMENTS and other areas of historic or scientific interest. Coordination of the areas into a unified national park system was insured by the formation of the National PARK SERVICE (Department of the Interior) in 1916.

Conservation of Federal timber lands and of upland watershed areas was begun in 1891 with legislation authorizing the creation of public-domain FOREST RESERVES. Management of the forest reserves was assigned in 1905 to the newly-established

FOREST SERVICE (Department of Agriculture). The management authority of the Forest Service has been enlarged, among other things, with permission to purchase lands for addition to national forests (Weeks Act of 1911 et al.). FORESTS PURCHASES are subject to the approval of the National Forest Reservation Commission created for this purpose. The Forest Service can also add to national forests through exchange of lands with private owners. The Department of the Interior also manages large timber holdings, notably the O & C LANDS of western Oregon, the Indian forests, and the forests on the unreserved public domain. In 1937, the Department was given authority for sustained-yield management of the "O and C" lands and later for the unreserved forests, both under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management. The Indian lands have been managed on a sustained-yield basis for many years. A landmark in forest management was the enactment in 1944 of a law enabling the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior to enter into COOPERATIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT agreements with other forest owners for joint management of adjacent tracts on a long-term, sustained-yield basis.

Other agencies founded to deal, among other things, with specific aspects of conservation of lands and resources, include the GEOLOGICAL SURVEY (topographic, geological, mineral, water, etc., surveys and supervision of mining operations on Federal and Indian lands), Bureau of Reclamation (RECLAMATION PROJECTS for irrigation of arid lands and development of power and other

water resources), Federal POWER COMMISSION (development of hydro-electric power on public lands by private companies), and Fish and Wildlife Service (refuge for MIGRATORY BIRDS and protection and development of other wildlife resources). A large gap in Federal land management was closed in 1934 with the passage of the Taylor Grazing Act. This act provided for the management of the unreserved public domain except for unreserved lands in Alaska. The LAND CLASSIFICATION provision of the act, as amended, authorized the Secretary of the Interior to classify the unreserved lands as to their suitability. This closed the era of indiscriminate disposal of the public domain and has permitted the institution of procedures to provide for the orderly disposition of the unreserved public domain, either by disposal to private owners or for management by the appropriate land management agency, Federal or local. The Taylor Grazing Act also provided for the establishment of GRAZING DISTRICTS to foster stability to the dependent livestock industry and conservation of the range. The Department of the Interior formed the GRAZING SERVICE to administer these grazing districts while the General Land Office was responsible for other features of the Taylor Act. To achieve unity of management of the unreserved public domain, the General Land Office and the Grazing Service were abolished in 1946 and their functions and personnel were assigned to the Bureau of Land Management, a new agency in the Department of the Interior.

Additional important conservation measures passed in the 1930's included the WHEELER-HOWARD ACT which stopped further

fragmentation of Indian reservations and provided for their tribal management; laws providing for a comprehensive FLOOD CONTROL policy and program for retirement of submarginal agricultural lands, and for soil and moisture conservation operations on both public and private lands; the Tennessee Valley Authority and less comprehensive water conservation plans; the group-settlement scheme carried out in the MATANUSKA VALLEY, Alaska; and the small-tract act governing the leasing of home, business, and recreational sites.

As was stated previously, the United States from 1807 to 1847 adopted a system of leasing Federally owned LEAD MINES. Leasing was dropped in favor of a general policy to sell mineral lands. With the beginning of the Twentieth Century, however, the mining laws were proving obviously inadequate with respect particularly to certain classes of minerals, including coal and petroleum. The laws were inadequate both from the point of view of the prospector and of the public interest. To provide orderly prospecting, the opportunity for conservation measures, and an adequate return to the Government, among other reasons, the Congress passed the MINERAL LEASING act of 1920. Under this act, the Government leases to private enterprise its public-domain deposits of oil, gas, phosphate, sodium, coal, potassium and sulphur. Operations under the act are administered jointly by the Bureau of Land Management and the Geological Survey. Since 1946 leasing of all types of minerals in most "acquired" lands have also been assigned to these agencies. The Bureau of Indian Affairs and the

Geological Survey supervise the leasing of Indian mineral lands.

To prevent fraud and conflict, maintain the least disorder in the disposal of the public domain, to institute management and conservation measures, and for other reasons, it has been necessary from time to time to reserve lands, that is, withdraw them from the operation of the disposal laws. Many WITHDRAWALS and reservations have been made by Congress and others have been made by the executive branch pursuant to specific authority delegated by Congress. But many also have been made by the President and other executive officers on the basis of what they believed to be their powers inherent in their responsibilities. Reservations of large a reas of land at the beginning of this century temporarily pending development of administrative conservation policies and the enactment of management legislation led to a challenge of these "inherent" powers. Congress responded in 1910 with a specific grant of power to the President to make temporary withdrawals. The Supreme Court held further in 1915 that the President had through the years acquired with the tacit consent of Congress general authority to make withdrawals in the public interest. A ruling of the Attorney General has held that the specific grant of power in 1910 did not diminish the general authority of the President. The President during the World War II subsequently delegated this authority, with certain safeguards, to the Secretary of the Interior.

The Public Domain Today

Under the disposal policies of the Government, approximately

1 billion acres of public domain in the States and less than ½-million acres in Alaska have been transferred to private owners and local governments. The method of disposition has been roughly as follows:

	Acres
Homesteads	285,000,000
Grants to States	225,000,000
Military bounties and private land claims	95,000,000
Grants to railroad corporations	91,000,000
Other, chiefly cash sales	335,000,000

There remains in Federal ownership today about 412 million acres of public domain in the States and 365 million acres in Alaska. The status of the present public domain is about as follows:

	States (Acres)	Alaska (Acres)
National forests	140,000,000	21,000,000
Grazing districts	149,000,000	-
Unreserved (outside of grazing districts)	27,000,000	270,000,000
Indian reservations	56,000,000	3,500,000
National defense	12,000,000	32,000,000
National parks and monuments	12,000,000	7,000,000
Other reservations	16,000,000	31,000,000

More than 95% of the present public domain outside of Alaska is located in the 11 westernmost States. The bulk of the lands are rough and mountainous or arid and semi-arid. Although little of it is suitable for cultivation, it is an important segment of the American economy, valuable for grazing, timber production, watershed protection, wildlife protection, water supplies, mineral production, power development, recreation, and military use among other values. To an increasing extent, the Government is

managing its land on a multiple-use and sustained-yield basis.

The public domain in Alaska is, by and large, undeveloped but it holds a great promise for the not-too-distant future.

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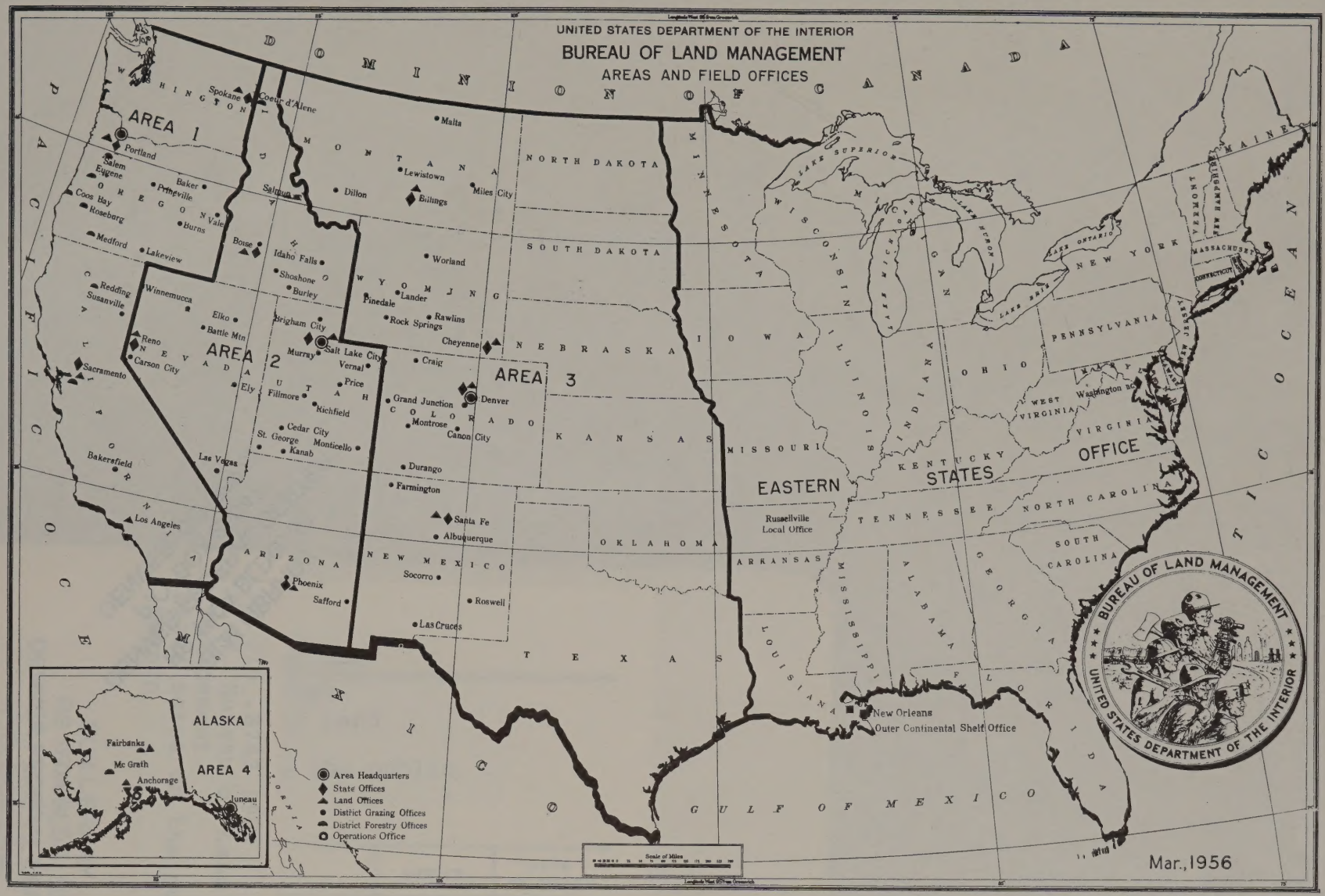

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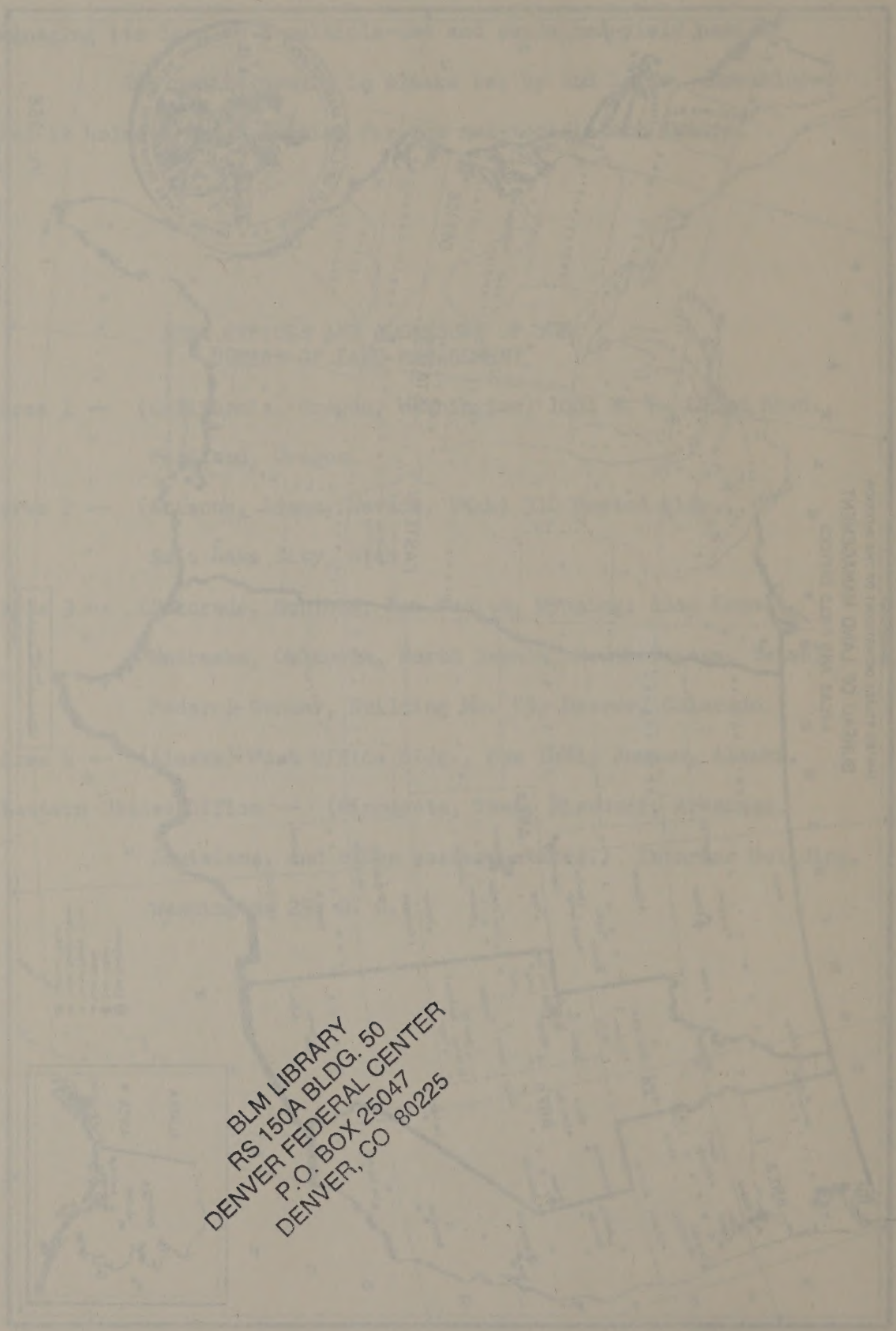

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